5.D.7

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN LIVING AND DYING UNTO THE LORD.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT

LONG-MEADOW, *MASSACHUSETTS*,

JANUARY 31, 1798,

AT THE

FUNERAL

OF

Mrs. SARAH STORRS,

CONSORT OF THE

REVEREND RICHARD SALTER STORRS.

BY CHARLES BACKUS, *A. M.*

PASTOR OF A CHURCH IN *SOMERS*.

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A

FUNERAL SERMON.

ROMANS XIV. 8.

FOR WHETHER WE LIVE, WE LIVE UNTO THE LORD; AND WHETHER WE DIE, WE DIE UNTO THE LORD: WHETHER WE LIVE, THEREFORE, OR DIE, WE ARE THE LORD'S.

THE words now read, teach us how to live, and how to die; and expreſs the language of every true chriſtian's heart. The Apoſtle, in the context, after having exhorted thoſe to whom he wrote to treat each other with forbearance, in things of an indifferent nature, reminds them of that pure and diſintereſted affection which formed their characters as the followers of JESUS CHRIST: Verſe 7th, *For none of us liveth to himſelf, and no man dieth to himſelf.*

IN the text, chriſtians are repreſented as devoting their days on the earth to their Lord; as governed by Supreme love to him both in life and in death; and as being the objects of his ſpecial love in the preſent world, and in the world to come.

LET us, in conformity to the deſign of the Apoſtle, and to the ſolemn occaſion on which we are aſſembled, briefly conſider the leading things which are included in the dedication which is made to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by his friends; or how thoſe live and die unto him who inherit the promiſes.

1. THOSE who *live unto the Lord*, give up themſelves to him without reſerve.

THE duty which God requireth of man, is a reaſonable ſervice; when conſidered in relation to the worthineſs of the infinite mind, and to the unalienable right of the Creator of the world. The obedient are fully ſatisfied that the ſervice enjoined by the Great Lord of ALL, is a reaſonable ſervice, and cheerfully pay him the homage of their hearts. The redeemed view themſelves as bought with a price, and as being under peculiar and high obligations to glorifiy God in their body, and in their ſpirit, which are his.

The self-dedication which is made by those who are devoted to the Supreme Will, is not the spontaneous growth of the moral nature with which they are born. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to his law. All mankind as they come into the world are children of wrath, they do not like to retain God in their knowledge, and prefer their private emolument to the divine glory, and the happiness of that holy intelligent kingdom, which is established by Him who came down from heaven to earth to save sinners, and poured out his soul unto death. The charity, or love, which is the sum of all God's commands, seeketh not her own, and rejoiceth in the truth to which Christ came to bear witness. Every one that is of the truth heareth his voice; and, like pious Mary, sitteth at his feet. We look for a character of this kind in vain except in those who are renewed in the spirit of their mind. They have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the manner of Him that created him. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

In the day of God's power his people are made willing: His throne is set up in their hearts, and they bow to his holy and sovereign dominion. They desire no change in his plan, and love every attribute, and doubt not the rectitude of every operation of the Most High, which is displayed before them. Imperfect as christians are in the present state, they desire nothing so much as that God may be glorified, and that his wise and benevolent designs may be accomplished. The impenetent are unreconciled to the methods of divine providence and grace; but those who are brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, submit to the divine will of their heavenly Father in all things. They believe that righteousness and judgment are his throne; and can say from the heart, "The LORD reigneth, let the earth rejoice!" They are in a degree, assimilated to the worshippers in the new Jerusalem, Rev. xv. 3. "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

All who come to Christ for life, approve of the law which they have transgressed, as holy, just, and good. If man does not deserve the full punishment which it threatens, there can be no grace in the gospel. No one can relish the plan of divine grace, who supposes that the original claims of the Supreme Lawgiver must be lowered, to place the disobedient under obligation to serve him. The commandment, in its spiritual extent, is set home on the hearts of the saved—sin revives, and they die. They do not entertain the least hope of acceptance with God, on any other ground than that of his mere sovereign mercy through the Mediator. Those who believe to the saving of the soul, love the Lord Jesus Christ, as the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. Their hearts are charmed with the Atonement, as a scheme in which "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and

peace have kiſſed each other." They count all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus their Lord. It is the deſire of their ſouls to be found in him, not having their own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith. Feeling wholly unworthy of the divine favour, and juſtly deſerving eternal death, they pray with the humble publican, "God be merciful to me a ſinner." They aſk forgiveneſs on account of the precious blood which was ſhed on mount Calvary, and for everlaſting happineſs, in the name of Him who was delivered for the offences of his people, and was raiſed again for their juſtification.

The ſalvation of the goſpel is a *holy* ſalvation. It is deſigned to ſave men, not *in*, but *from* their ſins. All who are made partakers of it, have *holineſs to the LORD*, written in their hearts, and conform to his revealed will in their lives.

2. To *live unto the Lord*, implies a conſecration of every talent to his ſervice.

Talents, or gifts, are diſtributed in different degrees, and in no ſmall variety. There is ample room for every one to occupy in the wide field which is before him.

No man's fidelity is to be determined by the opportunity he has for ſerving God, or his own generation; or by the ſtation in which he is placed, or by the gifts of which he is poſſeſſed. Thoſe who have the beſt advantages for knowing their Lord's will, may diſregard it moſt; thoſe whoſe rank gives them a commanding influence, may prove the ſoreſt ſcourges to mankind; and the beſt natural abilities may be perverted to abet the worſt deſigns. The juſtneſs of theſe remarks is confirmed by melancholy experience. If there be firſt a willing mind, or a heart warmed with the love of God, talents, whether few, or more, will be improved in getting, and in doing, good. The future reward, though conferred as a free gift, will be proportioned to fidelity, and to nothing elſe. We are furniſhed with an unerring ſtandard by which to eſtimate characters, in the words of the inſpired Apoſtle, 1. Cor. iii. 8. "Every man ſhall receive his own reward, *according to his own labour*"

We are liable to be captivated with the pomp of high ſtations, and with the glare of ſhining abilities, without enquiring whether they be employed to bleſs or to curſe ſociety. In the humble vale of obſcurity have been found ſome of the worthieſt characters. In the calm retreats of domeſtic life we may diſcover a fidelity, and zeal, which deſerve admiration. We find more in a well regulated houſehold to encourage the hope of the commonwealth, and of the church of God, than merely from the means of public inſtruction. Theſe laſt, though highly important, have ſeldom much effect on families of Balial. Where parental counſel is wholly wanting, children, in moſt inſtances, pay no regard to what is delivered from the deſk. Timothy appears to have been much indebted to

the early instruction which he received from his pious mother. The efforts of godly parents, in all ages, have received great encouragement, by the salutary consequences which have so often followed.

The christian church, is, in the Apostolic writings, compared with the natural body: Rom. xii. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one member one of another. The Apostle proceeds to exhort, "Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophesy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness."

The friends of Christ pray for the enlargement and prosperity of his kingdom, and labor to promote its interest, according to their ability. If we are under the governing influence of the spirit of the gospel, we shall not indulge envy at those who are placed in elevated stations; but shall consult how we may best improve the talents committed to us, and shall thankfully adore Him who graciously regards the feeblest sincere efforts in his service.

Those who stand foremost in the conflict with the avowed enemies of the cross, are, in a high degree, called to gird on the armour of righteousness, and to be co-workers with God. Paul did not confer with the flesh and blood, when it pleased God to reveal his Son in him, that he might preach him among the heathen. He, with the other Apostles, was willing to engage in the perilous work, of propagating the christian faith not only among the Gentiles, but among the Jews, who had laid violent hands on the Saviour, and had put him to death.

3. If *we live unto the* LORD, we shall endure afflictions with patience, and encounter evils with fortitude.

"Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." God is daily destroying mortal hopes, and bearing testimony against the rebellion of the human race. Sin has brought death into the world, and all our woe. Pain is intermingled with every earthly delight; and the course of divine Providence is pointed to warn us against resting in any created good, and to admonish us to choose the Lord for our portion; and to secure a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Tribulation, in some form or other, will overtake those who are designed for immortal happiness. Either their alluring earthly prospects will never be realized, or will previously be stripped of their dazzling lustre, or the things on which they had doated will be imbittered in the possession. This belongs to the fatherly correction which is promised to the faithful: Heb. xii. 6, 7. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom

he receiveth. If ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons; for, What ſon is he whom the father chaſteneth not?"

Afflictions lay open the heart, diſcover to chriſtians their ſins and weakneſs, and urge the neceſſity of truſting in the Lord alone. We cannot live unto him, if we indulge a murmuring temper, or ſpirit, in a day of adverſity. The Lord's people have always ſhone brighteſt in the furnace of affliction; and have honoured him in the higheſt manner, when they were in the midſt of the fiery trial. In ſuch ſeaſons they have prayed with uncommon fervour; and have encreaſed in their love, their patience, their zeal, and in all the graces of the chriſtian character. The heart of Paul was at no time warmer in the cauſe of Chriſt than when he was in bonds. When the Apoſtle was taking leave of the elders of the church of Epheſus, he declares, after mentioning that in every city, bonds and afflictions awaited him, "But none of theſe things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtify the goſpel of the grace of God"* The Apoſtles ſtrove in all things, to "approve themſelves as the miniſters of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, in impriſonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in faſtings, by pureneſs, by knowledge, by long-ſuffering, by kindneſs, by the Holy Ghoſt, by love unfeigned," and in a word, by their whole deportment, under all their reproaches and ſufferings. Hence they were enabled to ſay,—"As ſorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things."† The primitive chriſtians took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring ſubſtance.

We are required under reproaches, or worldly loſſes, or bereavements, to acknowledge the righteouſneſs of God, to feel our deſert of his anger, and humbly to ſupplicate his mercy. Our character is not to be determined by what we endure; but by the manner *how*, or *in which* we endure. If when we feel the rod we are humbled, and are invited to love God more and ſerve him better, we ſhall be able to adopt the words of the Pſalmiſt, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me."‡ Happy, thrice happy are they, who, while their earthly hopes are deſtroyed, become more and more weaned from the world, and grow in ripeneſs for that ſtate where the righteous will ſorrow no more. The promiſes in the Bible are full of conſolation to the believing and the patient. They will be ſupported under all their trials, and will receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him. Hear the gracious words which are addreſſed to believers, in the firſt chapter

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* *Acts*, xx, 24 † 2 *Cor.* vi.

‡ *Pſalm* cxix. 75.

of the firſt Epiſtle of Peter.—" Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation, ready to be revealed in the laſt time: Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a ſeaſon (if need be) ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt."

I PROCEED briefly to conſider, in the *ſecond* place, the import of *dying unto the Lord.*

THIS evidently implies a willingneſs, if God ſo require, to lay down our natural life for the ſake of Chriſt, or his kingdom. If we withhold this ſacrifice, when called to make it, we cannot be the diſciples of Him who died for ſinners. Many have heretofore ſuffered martyrdom, or have died by the hand of the executioner, for their faith in the Son of God. Few in theſe latter ages have been called to ſeal the ſincerity of their devotedneſs to Him with their blood. But, as chriſtians, we are ſtill to hold ourſelves in readineſs to go out of the world at the ſtake, or in any other way that the malace of Chriſt's enemies may invent, rather than deny him before men.

IF we meet death in the ordinary way, we are commanded to die unto the Lord. Every real ſervant of his, leaves the time and outward manner of his departure in his hand. We are ſtrangers to the ſpirit of the goſpel, if we do not cordially ſubmit to the Divine government in deſtining us to the grave; whether in the morning, the meridian, or the evening of human life. We may think it eligable to be continued long on the earth, that we may do more ſervice; either by training up our families, or by ſtriving to meliorate the ſtate of ſociety, or by laboring, as humble inſtruments in God's hand, to prepare men for future happineſs: But we are unfit to determine what is beſt on the whole; and ought, with unfeigned reverence, to commit all our plans to the diſpoſal of Him, who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working. He only knows whether it will be moſt conducive to his declarative glory, to call us inſtantly from a ſtate of perfect health, into the world of ſpirits, or to give us notice of Death's approach by a ſhort or a long ſeaſon of ſickneſs, or by any other means. What pain or weakneſs we ſhall paſs through while the king of terrors is advancing we know not. It is our indiſpenſible duty to be at all times prepared for the awful event, and to reſign to the will of the Sovereign Lord of Life and Death, the manner in which we are to go down to the land of ſilence. Our removal from time, will be ſo conducted as beſt to anſwer the deſigns of the Divine Government, and to promote our happineſs, if we be friends to the character of Him who ruleth. When we are praying relative to the dying hour, we ought to ſay unto God, *Not my will, but thine be done.*

AGAIN—Every true chriſtian deſires the gracious preſence of his Lord and Saviour, when he ſhall be called to endure the pains of

dissolution. David, in the XXIII Psalm, after declaring that the Lord was his Shepherd, proceeds to express his confidence in his Almighty Aid, in his expiring moments, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: For thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

WHETHER the christian will die in the triumph of faith, cannot be previously ascertained. This is not the privilege of many of God's people. The martyrs appear to have enjoyed it: And christians in general who have spent their days in a time of persecution, have met death with a more joyful hope of immortality, than their brethren whose lives were never in any remarkable perils from the violence of the wicked. Divine support will not be withholden from any of the faithful, in their conflict with the last enemy; they will not be suffered to yield to unbelief, far less, to be tortured with the horrors of despair. They will, if the exercise of the rational faculties be not suspended, commit their departing spirits into the hands of the Lord, and breathe after perfect communion with him.

WHATEVER be the doubts and fears of christians in the course of their pilgrimage, they do not desire to live always in this world. They are willing, in the appointed time to be absent from the body, that they may be present with the Lord. They are fully convinced that to depart, and to be with Christ, is far better than to abide in the flesh. An assurance of hope which excludes doubt, is the lot of but few christians in the course of their lives; and is not enjoyed by them without frequent interruptions. The followers of the holy Saviour, are not sufficiently sanctified in the present world, to enjoy for a long season an unwavering hope, or an unclouded prospect of a glorious immortality. But their hearts aspire to the perfect holiness and happiness of heaven, and they feel that while they are at home in the body they are absent from the Lord.

ALL the true servants of the Lord pray that he may be glorified in their death; that they may not shrink when called to follow him into the grave; and that his grace may enable them to bear honourable testimony to his name and kingdom, when they shall be summoned to quit their earthly house of this tabernacle. They look forward with humble confidence to the day when they must appear before their Judge; and they labour to be wholly devoted to Him, who both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. He will not forsake his people when their flesh and heart shall fail them, or when every worldly enjoyment shall cease; but he will be the strength of their heart and their portion forever. John declares in Rev. xiv. 13. "And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

BLESSED be God, that in every age are found, among the children of men, thoſe, who bear witneſs to the riches of his ſovereign mercy, in life, and in death. To ſome he is pleaſed, at the preſent time, to give ſuch lively faith and hope in a dying hour, as to cauſe their hearts to leap for joy, and their tongues to ſing aloud of his righteouſneſs.

WE truſt that the excellent Woman, whoſe remains are before us, lived and died unto the Lord. Her improvements in piety have ſeldom been equalled, and her memory is precious.

WERE ſhe permitted to ſpeak to us from that world to which ſhe is gone, ſhe would forbid a ſurviving friend to repreſent her character as faultleſs. She ſaw and lamented her want of greater conformity to the laws, and example, of her Lord and Maſter.

SHE did not ſeek to diſcover the imperfections of others; her eye was fixed upon her own. She was remarkably free from a bitter and cenſorious ſpirit. In her treatment of her fellow-chriſtians, the words of the Apoſtle, in the context, appeared to be engraven on her heart. "But why doſt thou judge thy brother? or why doſt thou ſet at naught thy brother? for we muſt all ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.

MRS. STORRS, was daughter of REV. NOAH WILLISTON, of *New-Haven*. In her childhood, her mother was removed by death.* Her ſurviving Parent did not labour in vain for her immortal happineſs. He cannot be unmindful of his obligation to render thanks to the Father of mercies, that he was pleaſed to impreſs inſtruction and counſel on her heart in early youth. At the age of *fifteen* ſhe was hopefully renewed in the ſpirit of her mind, and made a public profeſſion of religion; of which ſhe was an ornament to the cloſe of life.

SHE poſſeſſed a mind much above the common level—ſhe penetrated into characters and ſubjects with ſingular diſcernment. Few perſons were ſo well acquainted with the doctrines of the goſpel; and diſcovered ſo correct a taſte in judging of the merit of public performances.

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* *THIS amiable and pious lady died in the 27th year of her age. She left two Sons and two Daughters. Three of her children are yet living*, viz. *The Rev. Payſon Williſton, of Eaſt-Hampton Maſſachuſetts, The Rev. David Howe Williſton, of Tunbridge, Vermont, and Miſs Hannah Williſton, married to the Rev. Ebenezer Kingſbury, of Jericho, Vermont.*

MISS Sarah Williſton was married to the Rev. Richard Salter Storrs, Oct. 12th, '85. She died Jan. 27th, '98, in the 33d year of her age. She was the mother of ſeven children; her youngeſt was born Dec. 8th '97, and died a little before her: The ſix eldeſt are ſtill living.

She was able to appear with dignity in any circle; and by her modeſt and amiable behaviour, commanded eſteem from all ranks of people. Eaſy of acceſs, and conciliating in her manners; ſhe was addreſſed by all with a confidence which was expreſſive of their reſpect and love. She mingled with peculiar pleaſure with every collection, where the truths and duties of Chriſtianity were the theme. With her intimate friends ſhe entered into free diſcourſe on the religious exerciſes of her mind; and while ſhe was far from aſſuming any preeminence, ſhe was admired for her rare attainments in divine knowledge. Thoſe who were favoured with her ſociety, cannot forget with what ſatisfaction ſhe appeared to dwell on the perfection and glory of God's government, and the wonders of ſovereign grace. Her heart was wrapped up in theſe and like ſubjects. She gloried in the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom the world was crucified unto her, and ſhe unto the world.

Mrs. STORRS did not ſpend her time in reading books, which copy from the imagination rather than real life. Thoſe writings were her entertainment, which are adapted to inform the underſtanding, and to memd the heart. She read the holy Scriptures with rious attention, and peculiar delight; and conſtantly, and devoutly attended on all divine inſtitutions. She devoted her talents to the ſervice of God. It was her aim to live to his glory; and to withhold no exertion in her prwer to promote the cauſe of religion and virtue. She rejoiced when there were any appearances favourable to the increaſe of piety. Such times, were times of refreſhing to her ſoul.

She was diligent in buſineſs; ſhe was laborious, perhaps, to a fault, conſidering her delicate frame. She attended to her domeſtic concerns with unwearied aſſiduity; and made the numerous viſitants at her houſe eaſy and happy.

She was a pattern of the conjugal and parental virtues. The heart of her huſband did ſafely truſt in her. She miniſtered to his comfort and uſefulneſs all the days of her life. From what has been ſaid of her character, it is evident that ſhe was well formed for the ſtation in which Providence placed her. She diſcovered deep concern for the welfare of her children. She fervently prayed that Chriſt might be formed in them. She uſed often to obſerve, that it appeared to her of ſmall importance, whether they were rich or poor, in high or in low ſtations, in the world, when compared with their ſerving God on earth, and enjoying him in heaven.

Her benevolence was diſplayed in her conduct towards all around her; and ſhe took part in their joys and ſorrows. Sympathy with the afflicted, and munificence to the needy, formed a diſtinguiſhed trait in her character.

Mrs. STORRS was frequently viſited with threatening bodily infirmaties, in the laſt years of her life. Under theſe ſhe manifeſted

ſubmiſſion to Divine Providence; and confirmed the ſincerity of her profeſſion by her patience and fortitude. She appeared ſerene and cheerful, while her friends were much alarmed in fear of the event which now fills them with ſorrow. From her growth in piety, there was reaſon to apprehend that ſhe would in the midſt of her days be removed to the church above.

During the progreſs of the conſumptive diſorder which proved fatal, ſhe gave abundant evidence that ſhe knew whom ſhe believed. As her departure drew near, her hope was ſtronger, and in her laſt moments heaven dawned on her ſoul with remarkable brightneſs. Being favored with the uninterrupted exerciſe of reaſon, ſhe employed her time in ſpeaking of the worth and glory of Chriſt, and in giving ſuitable counſels to all around her. Her decline was rapid for a few of the laſt days of her life. Her ſtrength failed, and ſhe could ſeldom communicate her thoughts but in whiſpers. When in her laſt agonies, which were very painful, ſhe ſaid to thoſe preſent, *I am going!* A few minutes before ſhe expired, when the byſtanders did not expect to hear another word from her mouth, ſhe, to their ſurprize, ſpoke with a clear and loud voice, triumphing in the approach of her Redeemer, and in the riches and glory of his grace. *He comes! My LORD and my GOD!—How clear, how raviſhing the ſight! His countenance, O how comely!* She was aſked whether ſhe was impatient to be gone? She anſwered, with great emphaſis—*No! But it muſt be deſirable to one in ſuch diſtreſs, to join in the enjoyments and employments of the pure and bleſſed above.* On being aſked, whether the proſpect did not brighten, as ſhe drew near to eternity, ſhe replied, *The more it is contemplated, the more raviſhing and glorious it appears!* After making a ſhort pauſe, ſhe broke out—*Self-righteouſneſs is the bane of the Chriſtian!—I will go in the ſtrength of the LORD GOD, making mention of his righteouſneſs, and his only!* She was aſked whether the foundation of Chriſtian hope appeared ſufficiently broad? She replied, *Broad enough! broad enough! It is* God Himself! *O free grace!—I ſhall praiſe God for free grace to eternity!** Theſe were her laſt words which could be diſtinctly heard. Her lips ſoon ceaſed to move, and ſhe obtained a releaſe from ſin and ſorrow, and entered into the joy of her Lord. She died at nine o'clock on Saturday evening, and went to the enjoyments of the everlaſting Sabbath which remaineth to the people of God.

Our ſympathy is due to the bereaved friends in this day of their mourning. With them we muſt join in lamenting that ſo much worth has fled from our world; and, at the ſame time, in re-

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* *The laſt words of Mrs. Storrs, were collected, ſoon after her death, from ſeveral perſons who heard them as they fell from her lips. They all agreed in their account. The words are inſerted in the order in which they were delivered, and without the leaſt alteration.*

turning thanks to the infinite mercy, which hath provided a way for death to be disarmed of its sting.

My Dear Brother, you are called to drink the bitter cup, by the removal of the desire of your eyes. You have many consolations mingled with your sorrow. You will not forget your obligations to the gracious providence which united you, in the tenderest tie, with the lovely person who is now no more, and permitted her to continue with you for a number of years. You will always remember with what readiness she bore your burdens, how she strove to relieve you from anxiety, and to encourage activity and zeal in your sacred employment. It must forever be deeply imprinted on your mind, for what purposes she wished you to live; both as your life respects your dear offspring, and the church of God. It was her desire and prayer, that you might be instrumental in training up the children—the pledges of your mutual love, to serve the Lord in this world, and to enjoy him in the world to come; and that the blessing of many who were ready to perish might come upon you.

The pious example of the deceased, admonisheth you in a particular manner, to give diligence to make your calling and election sure; and to be quickened in the performance of your duty as a minister of Jesus Christ. You will not indulge a murmuring thought against the providence of God: He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? He hath recalled a lent blessing: Can you dispute his right to do what he will with his own? You have professed to give up yourself to God, and to choose to live and die unto him. Let your heart feel the force of covenant bonds at the present time; and rejoice in Him all whose works are truth, and whose ways are judgment.

You have often, Sir, in your discourses, laboured to enforce submission to the Divine Will under losses and bereavements. You are now called to practice the lessons you have inculcated upon others; and to recommend counsel by example. It will be happy for us who are ministes of the word, if we are enabled, when under the rod, to commit ourselves into the hand of Him in whose name we speak, and to whom we urge our hearers to be reconciled. We have the same passions and infirmties with those to whom we minister, and need the same help from Sovereign Grace. Let us look to God, whose strength is made perfect in the weakness of his servants. He can lead them with the Apostle Paul, to "glory in their infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon them." You may, my Brother, be more abundantly furnished by the stroke you now feel, to minister consolation to the sorrowful, than by any discipline through which you have heretofore passed. Nothing teaches us to feel for the afflicted like experience. Sore chastisements are peculiarly suited to lead those who endure them, to bear the burdens of the children of sorrow; and to qualify them to speak words of comfort to the wounded heart.

It muſt be painful to reflect, that you can no more on earth enjoy the ſociety of the amiable woman, who was once the partner of your joys and ſorrows.—Her work is done—and, as chriſtian charity requires us to believe, *well done*. May you be prepared to meet her in that world, where you will find her far more raiſed above her former ſelf, than you once thought her to be above all other mortals.

While God ſhall continue you among the living, be faithful to your children. Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. May thoſe who have arrived to an age capable of receiving inſtruction, remember the dying counſels of their mother and imitate her piety. May her prayers for all her ſurviving offſpring be heard; and may they prove your joy and crown of rejoicing.

Lately was you called to bury an infant child. You are about to lay the mother by its ſide. Theſe things are not for the preſent joyous, but grievous; but by the Divine bleſſing they will afterwards yield unto you the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs. I hope you can ſay from the heart—*The will of the Lord be done!* Look to him for ſupport while you are paying the laſt tribute to the remains of the deceaſed. Pray that you may not faint in a day of adverſity. Be in ſubjection to the Father of ſpirits, and you will be enabled to adopt the language of Job. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the Lord." May you have a lively foretaſte of the heavenly enjoyments, which will be the portion of thoſe who are wiſe, and who turn many to righteouſneſs. Be a follower of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promiſes. May you have peace and a joyful hope in death, and receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

The removal of a child muſt awaken all the tender ſenſibilities of grief, in the breaſt of a bereaved father. He hath been repeatedly called to mourn his loſs of near and dear friends. May his ſtrength be proportioned to his day of ſuffering: And may he be ripened for that world where the Lord's people will be at reſt. In the New Jeruſalem, "God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain: For the former things are paſſed away." We pray God to ſupport his ſervant, who, through bodily infirmities, is unable to attend on the preſent occaſion;* and grant, that at the cloſe of his active and uſeful life, an entrance may be miniſtered unto him abundantly, into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

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* *NEITHER the Father of the Deceaſed, nor any of his children was preſent at the Funeral, except* Mr. Williston *of Eaſt-Hampton.*

The Brothers of the Deceased, are by this death reminded of their mortality, and have set before them a powerful incentive, so long as they remain in this tabernacle, to put their dying charges in remembrance of the great concerns which relate to the soul, and the eternal world. Long may they labour in Christ's vineyard, be faithful and successful in their work, and finish their course with joy. May they, with the only surviving Sister, have Divine consolation imparted to them in this day of sorrow.

It has seldom happened that so many families of ministers have been called to mourning, by a single death, as in the instance before us. God grant, that this bereaving stroke may be followed with happy effects, in the several congregations now called to sympathize with those who speak to them the words of eternal life.

The people of this Church and society, cannot be insensible of the loss which they have sustained by the death, which is so universally lamented. You are witnesses of the manner in which the Deceased went through the world, and ended her days. You know with what wisdom and zeal she counselled the youth of her own sex in particular, to secure the unfading charms of piety and virtue. It is not to be questioned, that your spiritual welfare lay near her heart, and that she spared not herself, that her beloved companion might not be entangled with the affairs of this life, but might give himself wholly to his ministerial work. I am confident, my Brethren, that you mourn with your Pastor, and that you will strive to comfort him in this day of his sorrow. You will rejoice his heart by resolving to live and die unto the Lord. Pray for him at all times, especially when he is thus sorely afflicted. His case, and that of his family, call for your pity and compassion. By kind offices strive to soften his grief, now the hand of God hath touched him.

Among the mysterious dispensations of providence, is to be numbered the death of pious and useful persons in the prime of their days. Human wisdom would pronounce it best that such characters should be continued long on the earth; but a sovereign God often teaches us by his conduct, that all our calculations on this, as well as on other subjects, are vain. His way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known. Let us submit to his holy will when our brightest earthly prospects are darkened, and our fairest hopes are destroyed. We are now in a state of trial; and can know but little. The full revelation of God's righteous judgment is reserved to the future world. He will, hereafter, lay open every part of his government, before the intelligent creation, in so clear a manner, as will abundantly satisfy his faithful servants, and fill their mouths with praise.

Death, in human views, is without order. God only knows who is to be the next victim. Each one is warned to be ready for the solemn hour. No man hath power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war. The high and the low, the rich

and the poor, the old and the young, and the righteous and the wicked, muſt lie down together in the boſom of the earth.

Let all preſent feel the importance of living and dying unto the Lord. Be warned, my fellow-mortals, to prepare for a peaceful death, and a glorious eternity. Give up yourſelves to God. Be faithful in ſerving him, and your generation. Be thankful for mercies and privileges; and improve them to the glory of the great Giver. In ſeaſons of affliction be humble and patient. The faithful will remember that the Captain of their ſalvation was made perfect through ſufferings. Let us all commit the keeping of our ſouls to God, as unto a faithful Creator; and pray that his name may be honoured by us whether in life or in death. Our fellow creatures cannot accompany us when we ſhall walk through the dark valley. We muſt travel that road alone. O for the gracious preſence of the Redeemer, when the ſoul is about to wing its way to the world of ſpirits! Let us follow him in life, and we ſhall die the death of the righteous, and our laſt end will be like his. May we all, whether living or dying, be the Lord's: To Him be glory and majeſty, dominion and power, both now and ever.

AMEN.